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knows anything of the daily working of the school machine will disagree with Miss Tabor in her admirably clear presentation of the merits and defects of the present system. She sums it all up when she says: "Practically in London two codes are needed." But the chief lesson from the London elementary-school history of the last twenty years is one of hope. So vast a work has been already done! And if much remains, still the way has lately been opened to the necessary reforms.

No words of a reviewer are sufficient to praise adequately the two volumes which have so far resulted from Mr. Booth's investigation. Even the strongest believer in state action cannot but applaud this work of individual enterprise, which surpasses in accuracy and completeness almost all the work of government statistical bureaus, and yet is throughout marked by the most complete self-suppression. It is the positive duty of all those who are in charge of economic libraries to place these volumes on their shelves; and of every newspaper man or preacher who has based articles or sermons on the sensational work of the one Booth to give — not to impose too hard a task — half an hour's attention to the scientific work of the other.

W. J. ASHLEY.

Notions Fondamentales d'Économie Politique et Programme Économique. Par M. G. DE MOLINARI, Correspondant de l'Institut, Redacteur en Chef du *Journal des Économistes*. Paris, Guillaumin et Cie., 1891. — 8vo, 458 pp.

This work confines itself within the strictest of orthodox limits and yet makes progress. It contains, as its title implies, a positive plan of reform, based on natural law and in harmony with the author's view of the evolution of society. In the introduction there is a compact restatement of natural economic laws as presented in an earlier work of the author. In this is traced the operation of competition in securing the survival of superior races and of superior social institutions. Then follow a general statement of economic principles, an account of the genesis of capitalistic industry, and a separate and extended treatment of the processes of production, distribution and consumption. A valuable part of the work presents in nine chapters the elements of economic progress and the obstacles that it encounters. This part prepares the way for the third division of the book, that, namely, which contains the "economic programme," or plan of reform, in which for practical readers interest will chiefly centre.

This concluding part gives an answer to the question with which socialists sometimes disconcert their critics: "What do you propose to do?" A scientific system that recognizes serious evils, rejects the

remedies that are proposed and offers none of its own, is at a serious disadvantage. M. de Molinari does not content himself with negative work. He first reveals the weakness of socialism, and then offers, as chief elements of a positive programme of reform, free trade, security against war, the simplification of the state, the unification of markets, measures for securing on a grand scale the mobility of labor and a perfected self-government. This is avowedly a *laissez-faire* programme. In its entirety it will appeal to a considerable circle of readers, as embracing about all the positive changes for which it is worth while to contend. Parts of the programme will win a much wider assent. The sixth chapter of the third part of the work offers a valuable study of the limits of economic reform. It gives philosophical reasons for the instinctive rejection by every sound mind of schemes that promise too much.

J. B. CLARK.

Principles of Political Economy. By ARTHUR LATHAM PERRY, LL.D. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891. — xii, 585 pp.

The works of Professor Perry have been so long known in this country that any extended comment upon a new economic book by him is unnecessary. Not a few of us owe to him the beginning of our interest in political economy; but I fear, too, that to him is due not a little of the contempt that many sensible men have for the political economy of the schools, as it has been learned in this country. For Professor Perry's books have been very widely used, and his method of argument is very attractive to the novice.

This last book has the excellent qualities of his earlier works. There is the same easy, pleasant, rather verbose style, the vigorous epithet, the atmosphere of conclusiveness that leads the young reader to feel a sense of mastery which gives him a very desirable inclination toward the study of economic problems. The student is assured that

any just generalization, made and fortified inductively, is put thereby beyond hazard of essential change for all time; for this best of reasons, that God has constructed the world and men on everlasting lines of order.

How stimulating is this sentiment when the making of such "just generalizations" is shown to be but an easy task! No wonder that Professor Perry's works have been popular as text-books, if he has succeeded in making teachers and pupils believe that there is only

one unavoidable difficulty that lies at the very threshold of political economy [which must be] overmastered, and one walks thereafter with ease and pleasure throughout the economic domain.

All will agree that a student should have at least one hard task.